

## ***Oecobius amboseli* Shear & Benoit, 1974, a new record from Egypt (Araneida : Oecobiidae)**

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### **Abstract**

*Oecobius amboseli* Shear & Benoit, 1974 (Family Oecobiidae) is recorded from Cairo, Egypt. The male of this species is described for the first time.

**Keywords:** Male description, Spiders, Oecobiidae, *Oecobius amboseli*, Egypt.

### **Introduction**

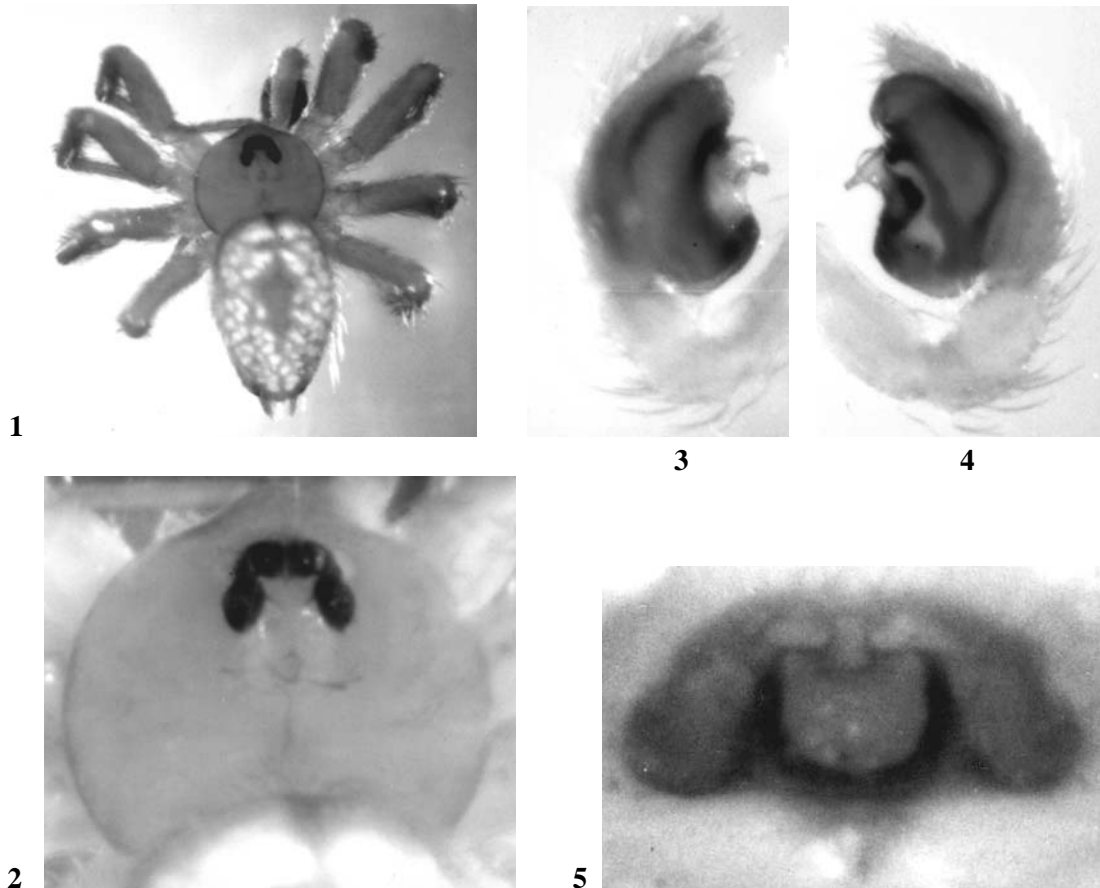
There are 78 species and one subspecies of genus *Oecobius* Lucas, 1846 recorded from our world (Platnick, 2004). Only four species of them were recorded from Egypt (El-Hennawy, 2002), i.e. *O. maculatus* Simon, 1870, *O. navus* Blackwall, 1859, *O. putus* O.P.-Cambridge, 1876, and *O. templi* O.P.-Cambridge, 1876. Hassan (1953) described all these species, partly under synonymous names. The discovery of other *Oecobius* species is expected in Egypt.

In 1990, I found a male and a female of an *Oecobius* species, which is different from the Egyptian species. The female's epigynum is very similar to that of the Kenyan *O. amboseli* Shear & Benoit, 1974; a species, which has only a unique female holotype (MRAC no. 141741) from Massai Amboseli Reserve, Kenya, collected by P.L.G. Benoit, 8 September 1972, and the male is wanting. The Massai Amboseli Reserve is located at the foot of Mt. Kilimanjaro, on the border of Kenya with Tanzania. After few years, Dr. David Penney collected one male and two females of *O. amboseli* from Uganda. Through comparing the Egyptian specimens with the Ugandan material, it becomes possible to confirm the identification and to describe the male of this species for the first time.

Abbreviations used: ALE = anterior lateral eye; PLE = posterior lateral eye; PME = posterior median eye.

Material from the following collections were examined: ACE = Arachnid Collection of Egypt, Cairo, Egypt; MRAC = Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren, Belgium.

All measurements are in mm.



Figs. 1-5: *Oecobius amboseli* Shear & Benoit, 1974. 1, 2. Male. 1. Habitus; 2. Carapace, dorsal view. 3, 4. Male palp. 3. Prolateral view; 4. Retrolateral view. 5. Female epigynum, ventral view.

***Oecobius amboseli* Shear & Benoit, 1974**  
(Figs. 1-11)

**Material examined**

I. Egypt: One male was collected from the building of the Criminal Investigation Laboratory, Bab El-Khalq, Cairo, Egypt [30°02'44"N 31°15'09"E Alt. 39m] on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1990 (ACE 19900101.1), and two females were collected from the same building on 7<sup>th</sup> January 1990 (ACE 19900107.1) and 8<sup>th</sup> May 1999 (ACE 19990508.1). All of them were found walking on the wall. [Note: *O. templi* is dominant in this locality.]

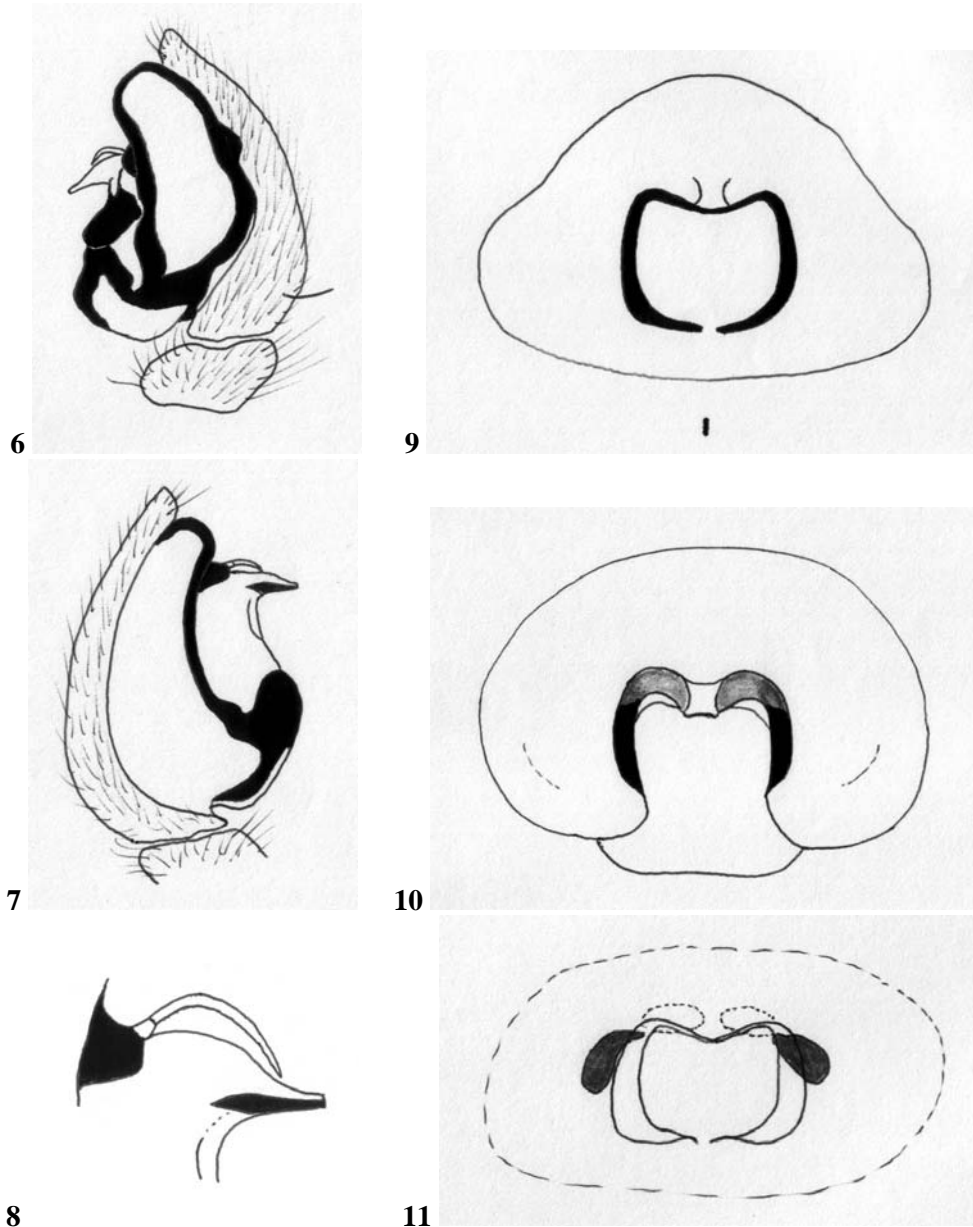
A female was collected from the building of Faculty of Science, Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt [30°04'46"N 31°17'07"E Alt. 46m] on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1987 (ACE 19870628.1), and a male from the same building on 16<sup>th</sup> April 1991 (ACE 19910416.1). They were collected from their nests. [Note: *O. putus* is dominant in this locality and *O. templi* is found too.]

The five specimens were collected by the author and deposited in the Arachnid Collection of Egypt (ACE) in Cairo, Egypt.

II. Uganda: One male and two females of: *Oecobius amboseli*; Det. Penney D. 1995; Loc. Uganda, Rubaga, Kampala, outside walls of building; Rec. Penney D., VII. 1994; Mus.R.Afr.Centr. 215071.

### Diagnosis

*Oecobius amboseli* can be distinguished from the other known *Oecobius* species by genitalic characters: the finely pointed median apophysis and its position with the embolus of the male palpal organ (Figs. 6-8), and the very simple epigynum distinguished by a large central fossa and widely separated vulvae of the female (Figs. 9-11).



Figs. 6-11: *Oecobius amboseli* Shear & Benoit, 1974. 6-8. Male palp. 6. Retrolateral view; 7, 8. Prolateral view (8. detail). 9-11. Female. 9. Epigynum, ventral view; 10. Epigynum, proventral view; 11. Vulvae, dorsal view.

### Description

The Egyptian specimens are in concordance with the characters of genus *Oecobius* (Shear, 1970, p.135) and the description of the holotype of *Oecobius amboseli* (Shear & Benoit 1974, pp. 717, 719).

**Male** (ACE 19900101.1). Total length: 1.87. Carapace (Fig. 2) yellowish-brown with blackish border and blackish tinctures in front and behind eyes with a distinctly projecting sub-triangular clypeus; a few setae are present in the ocular area and behind it; 0.68 long, and 0.87 wide. Eyes: anterior row almost straight, posterior row procurved, ALE and PME light, PLE largest, ALE smallest, PME irregularly subtriangular, separated by their diameter. Sternum heart-shaped, with wide base separating between the coxae of the fourth legs. Legs yellowish-brown, lighter than carapace, densely covered by hairs, leg I: Femur 0.85, Patella 0.31, Tibia 0.65, Metatarsus 0.61, Tarsus 0.44, Total length 2.86. Length of Patella-Tibia I : Width of carapace 1.103. Abdomen (Fig. 1) spindle-shaped with white irregular patches among light brown ones densely covered by long hairs, 1.22 long, and 0.82 wide. Palpal organ (Figs. 3, 4, 6, 7) characterized by its finely pointed median apophysis and its position with the embolus of the male (Fig. 8).

Colour variation: ♂ (ACE 19910416.1): carapace and legs yellowish-white.

**Female** (ACE 19900107.1). As male, except for the following: Total length 2.27. Carapace with three black patches on each side attached to the blackish border and a broad blackish area behind eyes extending to the posterior edge of the carapace in a narrower shape, 0.78 long, 0.92 wide. Leg I: Femur 0.88, Patella 0.32, Tibia 0.66, Metatarsus 0.65, Tarsus 0.48, Total length 2.99. Length of Patella-Tibia I : Width of carapace, 1.065. Abdomen with a few dark brown patches, 1.53 long, 1.19 wide. Epigynum is very simple, distinguished by a large central fossa (Figs. 5, 9, 10) and widely separated vulvae (Fig. 11).

Colour variation: ♀ (ACE 19870628.1): carapace and legs yellow, without black patches.

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